

Group I, claims 1-5, 7 and 11-12, drawn to a fluororubber composition;

Group II, claims 9-10, drawn to a process of curing a fluororubber composition.

For the purpose of examination of the present application, Applicants elect, with traverse, Group II, claims 9-10, drawn to a process for curing a fluororubber composition.

Applicants submit that claims 11 and 12 directed to a product made by the process of claims 9 and 10 are sufficiently linked to claims 9-10. Claims 9 and 10 are directed a novel process of curing a fluororubber composition. The cured product is the subject of claims 11 and 12. Applicants submit that in the Examiner's examination of the process claims the product made by the specific process will also necessarily be examined. If the process is found to be novel, then any product made from the novel process is also novel. Pursuant to *Atlantic Thermoplastic Co. v. Faytex Corp.*, 24 USPQ2d 1138, 1140 (Fed. Cir. 1992), the product by process claims are process claims with patentable process limitations. Thus, the product and the process are sufficiently related to allow for examination in unison.

As such, Applicants respectfully request that claims 11 and 12 and claims 9 and 10 be rejoined and examined together.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully

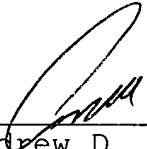
requested to contact Kecia Reynolds (Reg. No. 47,021) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

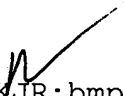
Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By



Andrew D. Meikle, #32,868


ADM/KJR:bmp
0020-4621P

P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000

(Rev. 01/02/02)